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AUTHOR Thompson, Stephen J.
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ABSTRACT

Prepared for college-level secondary reading course instructors and others involved with preservice and inservice teacher education, this paper introduces the Information Exchange as a vehicle for sharing resources in an effort to meet secondary reading certification requirements. A statement outlining these requirements, supplemented by Appendix A, which lists seven national surveys of certification requirements for secondary reading, establishes the need for the exchange. Suggested guidelines for the development of preservice secondary reading courses include the following factors: (1) attitude, knowledge, and skill objectives; (2) well-developed field experiences; and (3) course concepts models. Appendix B gives an annotated list of information sources for the education course on secondary school reading, with information categories parallel to those on the Secondary Reading Course Information Exchange Form: course description, course objectives, assignments, field experience, simulations, modules, audio visuals, and computer software. Appendix C is the Information Exchange Form, which teachers may use to join the Exchange. (JD)

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# Secondary Reading Course Information Exchange: Colleges of Education Respond to State Certification Requirements

Stephen J. Thompson

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"Secondary Reading Course Information Exchange: Colleges of Education Respond to State Certification Requirements"

Dr. Stephen J. Thompson
Professor of Reading
College of Education
The University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325

This paper introduces the Secondary Reading Course Information Exchange, a vehicle for college of education instructors who wish to share resources for teaching secondary reading courses in teacher preparation programs. It establishes the need for the Exchange by outlining state certification requirements for secondary reading and suggests guidelines for the development of pre-service secondary reading courses. A list of annotated sources of information is presented, and procedures for participating in the Exchange are provided.

## Certification in the States

States are increasingly requiring newly-certified secondary teachers to have reading in their collegiate preparation programs. At least eight surveys of state departments of education were conducted and reported between 1973 and 1984 (Appendix A). Considered together, these surveys document the trend toward including work in secondary reading for certification. In many states, the requirement takes the form of a course within the professional sequence, and in most states it extends to all subject areas in which certification is offered.

The trend to include reading for those who teach in middle, junior, and high schools is dramatic. Bader's 1975

survey revealed that seventeen states plus the District of Columbia had a reading requirement in some or all of the academic fields. The most recent survey, conducted in 1983 and reported in 1984, showed that thirty-seven states had the requirement for some or all of the fields. Thus, twenty states--73% of the total--added the requirement during an eight-year period. If the trend continues through the end of the decade, at least 80% of the states will require preparation in reading instruction for at least some--and in most cases all--secondary teachers.

What are the implications for teacher education and, by extension, the instruction of America's youth? Can we expect that these reading requirements will translate into improved lessons that show students how to read and study--to grow toward independence in learning? That's the pay-off question, and follow-up studies are needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the reading requirement.

For the present, however, movement is needed on two fronts. The first, which is detailed below, is the secondary reading course itself. It must be the very best experience the secondary education student has. On the second front are secondary schools. Newly-certified teachers who are employed in these schools need to be supported on the job. The support must come from supervisors and administrators who have had reading in their own credentialing programs and from fellow faculty members who have had in-service experiences in reading. In addition, support must come from reading teachers in middle, junior, and high schools who are willing and able to consult with new teachers on the topic of content area reading.

**Guidelines for Reading Courses**

For the most part, pre-service students in secondary reading courses have little experience with the concepts of content area reading. They are graduates of secondary schools where, as Richard and JoAnne Vacca phrase it, "content is king" (Content Area Reading, Little, Brown and Co., 1986). They have experienced lessons that follow a read, recite, review sequence based on content, or subject matter. Seldom have they experienced as students themselves the making of an assignment that, for example, helps learners develop meanings for subject-related terminology found in the reading assignment.

As a consequence, instructors must present activity-based courses which, while grounding students in sound principles of teaching and learning, simultaneously compensate for experiences unknown from secondary school years. Plans for doing just that are facilitated by course construction that includes (1) attitude as well as knowledge and skill objectives; (2) well-developed field experiences; and (3) reading course lessons that are themselves models of the concepts they teach. Elaboration on each of these points follows.

(1) Attitude Objectives

There are certain bits of knowledge we want students in secondary reading courses to acquire. A casually-stated example might be "there's more to readability than sentence and word length." Furthermore, there are certain performance skills we want students to acquire such as assessing a textbook using

a self-developed readability checklist. However, regardless of how well we teach for knowledge and skill outcomes, if our students are not convinced in their hearts--the affective domain of their existence--we cannot expect application of content reading concepts to take place in contract teaching. For example, on the topic of readability, unless teachers-to-be feel the frustration that comes from trying to learn from a text that's too difficult, they are not likely to take a sympathetic and corrective approach to their own students who find themselves in a similar predicament.

Attitude objectives written by the instructor remind him/her of course priorities, influence the use of class time, and govern choice of class activities and assignments. The instructor may choose to share them with students via the course syllabus and may phrase them in conventional--or as in the illustration below--nonconventional ways.

Attitude objective for prereading strategies:

"A teacher is a bridge builder: he's skilled in spanning the gap between what the student already knows and what he's about to learn."

Attitude objective for study guides:

"A teacher is the consummate tour director: she expertly guides students through subject matter she knows well with one goal: eventually they'll be able to guide themselves."

(2) Field Experiences

Field experiences can be a meaningful component of secondary school content reading courses. They can reinforce course concepts (knowledge objectives); they can make learning functional

through the production and use of materials for immediate class use (skill objectives); and they can touch the sensibilities (attitude objectives). The potential for field experiences is great.

The potential is minimized or lost entirely, however, if they are not integrated with what goes on in the college classroom. The author's experience is that college students need to be helped to see connections between theory and practice, between what they read in the college text and what they observe in the secondary classroom. Many students do not naturally and automatically make the connections on their own. Thus, the instructor's job, in part, is to help students relate isolated and discreet observations, "bit teaching," and feelings with on-campus course readings and lectures. Guided discussion is the type of help most likely to tie reading and observation together.

A vehicle for guided discussion is what the author calls Reading and Observation Guides (ROG's). Items from a ROG on readability appear below.

1. What do readability formulae measure? Why does your text author call them "rubber rulers?"

2. What does the Cloze procedure evaluate?

3. Our class discussion revealed factors affecting reading ease that are not measured by readability formulae. List at least six of these factors that seem to you to be very important in selecting texts for middle and secondary students.

4. Using the Text Analysis Checklist you developed in this Content Reading Class, analyze the text used in your field experience class. Briefly report the results of your analysis here.

5. Considering the abilities and interests of students in your field experience class, name and briefly discuss <u>two</u> strategies the teacher of the class might use for students who are honestly frustrated by it. Draw on your class text, our class discussions, and the suggestions of your field experiences teacher for your strategies.

Some items on the ROG can be answered by reading the class text or by listening to lectures. Some can be answered on the strength of observations from the field site. Completed outside of class, ROG's are discussed in class in small groups and by the entire class with the instructor acting variously as facilitator, experienced secondary class teacher, and expert in the principles of teaching subject matter and reading processes together. Shared discussion among class members and instructor usually results in learning from each other in addition to synthesizing and personalizing learning for self.

(3) Modeling Course Concepts

Instructors of secondary reading courses need to practice what they preach. To illustrate, if the instructor recommends that secondary teachers group students for instructional purposes, then he/she should occasionally group students in the

college class. And, as the grouping takes place, the instructor should explain the purpose of grouping and why grouping was chosen over other class arrangements given present purposes. Subsequently, students should be encouraged to reflect on their experiences. What did grouping accomplish? How might it have been more productive? Would individual or whole-class work have accomplished the teacher's pruposes more effectively and efficiently?

**Sources of Information**

Brief annotation for teacher educators who teach courses in secondary reading (with titles such as "Content Area Reading," "Developmental Reading in the Secondary School," etc.) are included in "Sources of Information for the Teacher Education Course Secondary School Reading" (Appendix B). The categories in the Sources of Information parallel those on the Secondary Reading Course Information Exchange form.

**Information Exchanage**

The Exchange is a network for instructors of college level secondary reading courses and others involved with preservice and continuing education of teachers. It was inaugurated at a session of the Organization of Teacher Educators in Reading at the Philadelphia meeting of the International Reading Association in April, 1986. To join, complete the Exchange form (Appendix C). Mail it to the address on the form. In return

you will receive a copy of the first compilation of shared information as well as subsequent compilations. Colleagues are urged to join this effort to fulfill the promise of secondary reading certification requirements: students who achieve in content classes because they've been taught how to read and learn by content class teachers.

## APPENDIX A

## NATIONAL SURVEYS OF SECONDARY READING AS A CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT


1973 Estes, Thomas H. and Dorothy Piercey. "Secondary Reading Requirements: Report on the States." Journal of Reading, Vol. 17, October, 1973, pp. 20-24.

1975 Bader, Lois A. "Certification Requirements in Reading: A Trend." Journal of Reading, Vol. 19, December, 1975, pp. 237-40.

1977 Lambert, Walter J. "Required Preparation in Reading for Secondary Teachers." Reading Horizons, Vol. 18, Summer 1978, pp. 305-06.

1979 Thomas, Keith J. and Michele Simpson. "Reading Requirements and Basic Secondary Teacher Certification: An Update." Reading Horizons, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Fall, 1979) pp. 20-26.

1981 International Reading Association Certification Requirements in Reading (3rd ed.), IRA, Newark, Delaware 1981.

1982 Thompson, Stephen J. "Secondary Certification Requirements in Reading: An Update." The Journal of Reading Education, Vol. 9, No. 2, October, 1982, pp. 19-24.

Walker, James E. and Romaine St. Germain. "States' Reading Requirements for Secondary Certification." presentation Chicago IRA (contact J. Walker, Texas Women's University, Denton, Texas for further information).

1983 Farrell, Richard T. and Joseph M. Cirroncione. "State Certification Requirements in Reading for Content Area Teachers." Journal of Reading, November, 1984, pp. 152-158.

## APPENDIX B

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR THE TEACHER EDUCATION COURSE SECONDARY SCHOOL READING

### 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Dalin, Kenneth L.
"Skill Training for All Secondary Teachers"
Journal of Reading, November 1971, pp. 109-114

He discusses eight topics of study that are essential: a general theory of reading, an overview of basic reading skills, training in book-reading skills, training in the psychology of study, understanding the role of rate in reading, understanding corrective and remedial reading, training in the selection of reading materials, and training in the skills of classroom questioning.

Schnell, Thomas E. and Richard W. Burnett
A Competency-Based Approach to Preparing Secondary Level Teachers of Reading (1975)

ERIC ED 119 104

If you'd like to build a competency-based course, here's one way to proceed. The emphasis is preparing secondary reading teachers, not subject matter teachers who know how to help students learn through reading textbooks. However, the units on study skills and content reading might well be usable in a secondary content reading course. Unfortunately, the units themselves are not described in detail. I'd advise writing the first author for more information: Thomas R. Schnell, University of Missouri-St. Louis, 8001 Natural Bridge Road, St. Louis, Missouri 63121.

Donlan, Dan
Read Chapter Six and Fill out the Worksheet (1977)

ERIC ED 149 314

Donlan suggests that the sequence in a secondary reading course should go through four phases: Examining the Nature of the American High School, Examining the Nature of the Content Area, Developing Strategies for Teaching Students to Learn from Text, and Field Experiences.

## 2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Lefevre, Carl A., Sr.
Language and Reading Skills in the Secondary School: A New Course at Temple University 1970-present, (1976)

ERIC ED 137 719

The course is organized according to nine competency statements which are listed. For each, a brief description of activities to implement the competency is provided.

Kennedy, Larry D. and Howard G. Getz
"A Competency-Based Preservice Secondary Reading Program"
Journal of Reading, October 1972, pp. 15-19

This program description from Illinois State University is dated, but it does give a good description of a personalized, competency-based secondary reading course. Three examples of behavioral objectives (competencies) are given in the article. Teaching teams use a variety of modes and materials to teach and evaluate competencies. (It would be fun to know if ISU is still using this approach.)

## 3. ASSIGNMENTS

Smith, Lana J. and Dennie L. Smith
"Experiential Learning: Teaching Teachers to Transfer Their Knowledge"
Journal of Reading, January 1986, pp. 342-345

As teachers of secondary reading courses, we hope that the philosophy and strategies learned in our college classrooms and field sites will find their way into actual secondary school classrooms. And, we look for ways to make that transfer happen. Smith and Smith think they've found one way: to impress on students the importance of prior knowledge on comprehension of text, students must plan and carry out an experience they've never had before. Their report to the class must connect the experience to ideas studied in the course. The Smiths' observation is that preservice teachers who have had this assignment are more likely to relate student learning and learning tasks during student teaching.

Stefanelli, Anna Mae
Content Analyses of the Required Reading Courses for Prospective Secondary Teachers at EAch of the Seven State Teacher Training Institutions in New Jersey (1982)

ERIC ED 217 375

Seven state teacher training institutions were surveyed to determine how the state mandate for reading courses was being met (I understand the mandate may have changed recently). The kinds of assignments for the courses at the colleges are presented on ERIC-number pages 35, 37, 40, 42, 44-45, 46, 49.

## 4. FIELD EXPERIENCE

Stoughton, Charles B. and others
Pre-Student Teaching, Program, Module I (1978)

ERIC ED 153 207

This pre-student teaching module was developed at the University of New Mexico. It integrates field-based experiences (the college student acts as a paraprofessional or reading tutor in a public school) and campus-based instruction. I like the description because campus meetings occur immediately after the school experiences (in terms of time of day and days of the week), and the teacher of the college course is also the supervisor of the school experience. A cover letter to the student ("General Statement of Principles" explains the purpose of the field-based experiences and states in no uncertain terms how the student should conduct himself in the schools).

Memory, David M.
"Implementing a Practicum in a Required Content Area Reading Course"
Reading World, December 1983, pp. 116-123

Memory has his students tutor secondary youth in their schools. He requires these field experiences because he expects (hopes too?) two results: increased interest in content reading strategies and application of strategies during contract teaching. Field assignments require students to try out strategies read about or seen presented in class. The assignments (p. 12) are in the area of motivating interest in reading, vocabulary, and questioning.

## 5. MICROTEACHING

My review of the literature uncovered some "mentions" of microteaching, but no detailed descriptions. I know some instructors of secondary reading courses have their students do microteaching (mini-lessons, "small-bit" teaching, etc.); if you are one of these people, perhaps you would be willing to share how you do it through the Information Exchange.

## 6. SIMULATIONS

Masztal, Nancy B.
"Cybernetic Sessions: A High Involvement Teaching Technique"
Reading Research and Instruction, 1986, 25, (2) pp. 131-138

I haven't tried this with my classes yet, but I intend to. Here's the abstract:

> A technique that has proved to be useful and has provided variety in teacher education classes at the graduate and undergraduate levels is the cybernetic session. In this session, small groups of participants quickly respond to pre-planned questions within a specified time frame. There are four phases: Pre-planning, which is handled by the instructor, and Response Generating, Data Synthesizing, and final preparation, which actively involve the participants in the development of a final poster listing data generated about a specific topic. This listing can become the basis for discussion, class handouts, or further research. Cybernetic sessions may be used diagnostically to determine the known versus the unknown, to develop a common data base, to review/evaluate information or to synthesize ideas.

Shuman, R. Baird
"Teaching Teachers to Teach Reading in Secondary School Content Classes"
Journal of Reading, December 1978, pp. 205-211.

Shuman reminds us that American secondary schools exist to teach all peoples' children. Some problems facing secondary teachers are not so much the result of a clash of values and backgrounds that come with the goal of universal education. Teachers' attitudes in this regard are crucial, Shuman believes, and must be dealt with

directly if we expect content reading strategies to be embraced by secondary teachers. College class learning experiences that bring these attitudes to the fore for identification and discussion are, therefore, well worth the time they take. For example, I have used Shuman's "book index" exercise with my secondary reading course students. Many of them have difficulty with it, and that provides the basis for discussing what secondary students know about using book parts in their study and that content teachers must feel responsible for showing kids, in Herber's words, "how to do that which we assign them to do."

## 7. MODULES

Rembert, Emma W.
Reading in the Secondary School (1975)

ERIC ED 113 678

Five modules are presented in great detail. Each module includes an introduction, list of goals, tasks or assignments, and suggested instructional resources. Some field experiences are suggested. Tests for competency are not provided.

Fardig, Glen E. and Gail B. West
Assist Students in Developing Technical Reading Skills. Modules M-2 of Category M--Assisting Students in Improving Their Basic Skills. Professional Teacher Education MOdule Series (1985)

ERIC ED 252 702

These modules come from the National Center for Research in Vocational Education (Ohio State University). Their focus is content area reading, and although they're aimed at the vocational teacher, I think large parts of the mods could be used with some modification with a more general audience of all subject matters. The topics are learning to read and reading to learn, vocabulary, comprehension, reading graphics, and analyzing reading materials. The introductions to each of the mods are well written, although necessarily brief. The originals of some of the illustrative materials must have been in color or light print because some of the ERIC-reproduced pages are impossible to read.

8. **HANDOUTS**

I found nothing in my literature search that struck me as worthy of passing on to you.

9. **AUDIO VISUALS**

Three reading in content area films: (#1) "Reading in the Content Areas: Preparation" (22 min.); (#2) "RCA: Process" (21 min.); (#3) "RCA: Interaction" (20 min.).

Available from Syracuse University, Film Marketing Division, 1455 East Calvin Street, Syracuse, N.Y. 13210.

Produced by Hal Herber, these 16 mm color sound films contain vignettes from actual content classrooms where teachers demonstrate reading, thinking, and study strategies connected to subject matter mastery. Herber introduces and explains both RCA philosophy and the strategies which illustrate before, during, and after reading forms of guidance.

Two reading in the content area videocassettes: "N.S. 7222 Reading to Learn Part I" and "N.S. 7223 Reading to Learn Part 2." For ordering information, write Nova Scotia Department of Education, Curriculum Development, P.O. Box 578, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 259.

These films explain and demonstrate procedures teachers of any secondary subject can use throughout a lesson to help students read their content materials more effectively, thus ensuring better learning. A workshop guide with activities accompanies the films ("Reading to Learn Workshop Guide"). A second handbook, "Reading Across the Curriculum: Grades 7-9" is also available from the Department. Although the references are dated, the descriptions of content reading exercises might serve as ideas upon which to build assignments for the secondary reading course.

10. **COMPUTER SOFTWARE**

(I know that programs exist for various readability formula. Directions have been published in the Journal of Reading. I feel so strongly that readability is so much more than what is measured by a formula, however, that I couldn't bring myself to look up the reference for inclusion here! I much prefer that my students define readibility much more broadly, and I have them prepare text analysis checklists such as those modeled by Rich and Joanne Vacca in their Content Area Reading, 2nd ed; Little Brown, 1986: pp 40-44. Does anyone know of software that would be helpful in presenting the collegiate secondary reading course?)

**Return to:**

Dr. Stephen J. Thompson
Department of Secondary Education
The University of Akron
Akron, OH 44325

**APPENDIX C**

**SECONDARY READING COURSE INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

The Information Exchange is for instructors of college level secondary reading courses and others involved with preservice and continuing education of teachers. It's my hope that we can share materials and resources which will be helpful to each other as we present our reading courses to middle grade, junior and senior high school teachers and teachers-to-be.

Directions: Fill in the identifying material below and then check those items you will share (space provided for a short descriptive comment). I will compile all this information and send a copy to each person who has filled out this form. At that point, we can decide which items we wish to have and correspond with each other individually to obtain them.

---

NAME:_____ POSITION:_____

ADDRESS:_____ PHONE: (____)_____

_____

---

_____ 1 Course Description (catalogue descriptions or syllabi regarding general nature of the course, intended audience, pre-requisites, requirements, grading, etc.)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 2 Course Objectives (lists of objectives, whether stated behaviorally, as general statements of purpose, or as competencies; attitude as well as knowledge and skill objectives)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 3 Assignments (descriptions of those that work particularly well, criteria for grading sheets, etc.)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 4 Field-Experience (directions for making observations or being involved at school sites and other educational settings; lists of possible experiences; formats for reporting on these experiences and/or earning course credit for them)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 5 Microteaching (descriptions of "small bit" teaching, usually with peers acting as "students")

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 6 Simulations (instructor prepared lesson segments, demonstrations, role-playing situations, etc., the purpose of which is to give an experience with or a feeling for student needs, instructional strategies)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 7 Modules (samples of modules or learning packets to be used by individuals or small groups at their own pace)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 8 Hand-Outs (copies of short readings, exercises, illustrative lesson materials, etc.)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ 9 Audio-Visuals (information about films, filmstrips, audio tapes, transparencies, etc.)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____10. Computer Software (sources of information about programs, applications of programs, etc.)

Descriptive Comment:_____

_____

_____ Other:_____

_____

_____